Francisco Mackinlay

CongelArg

“ I saw an opportunity to lead the logistics industry in Argentina. ”

COUNTRY	Argentina
INDUSTRY	Industrials
YEAR SELECTED	2005
WEBSITE	www.congelarg.com/

COMPANY SNAPSHOT

In the midst of the Argentine political and financial crisis, Francisco launched a firm in one of the region's most challenging industries — logistics. Today he stands out as a model of professionalism, boasting international clients such as McDonald's, and respected partners like Carrefour who laud his diligence and good service. With Francisco leading the way, CongelArg has the competitive and professional edge to become the market leader in South America. Since selection by Endeavor, CongelArg has succeeded in expanding throughout Latin America and continues to broaden its range of services.Some people see opportunity in the face of a crisis. Francisco Mackinlay is one of those people. In the midst of the Argentine political and financial crisis, when other firms were fleeing the region and access to financing was little more than a pipedream, Francisco launched a firm in one of the region's most challenging industries – logistics. Today, he stands out as a model of professionalism and excellence in a context of lost opportunity.

Francisco began working in the logistics industry while he was still a student in industrial engineering at ITBA and rose through the ranks of both Cerveceria Quilmes, Argentina's largest beer producer, and Keystone Foods, a leading multinational. At Keystone Foods, Francisco first served as logistics manager for Argentina and then for Venezuela before becoming VP of Logistics for Latin America. But when the Argentine crisis hit in late 2001, Keystone decided to exit the region, leading Francisco to launch his own logistics firm. In 2002, he invested all of his savings to the launch of Congelarg and focused the company exclusively on cold-chain transportation services. McDonald's was his first client.

As Keystone's marquis client, McDonald's, was attracted by Francisco's reputation for diligence and service and wanted him as a strategic partner for distributing frozen products. Soon after, Francisco began transporting dried products for new top clients such as Wal-Mart, Carrefour, and Arcor. In 2002, at the height of Argentina's financial collapse, Francisco invested additional capital to further jumpstart his venture, and despite the project's tenuous future, he convinced Olivier Halley, the son of the creator of Carrefour, to be his partner. Boosts such as these caused Congelarg to acquired new clients quickly and easily.

Today, Congelarg continues to grow and is looking to become the market leader in South America. Being far more innovative than its competition, it has the potential to make a distinct mark. The logistics sector in Argentina is composed of a small number of large multinational firms and a larger number of independent local SMEs that operate with old trucks, low service standards, and often lack the ability to meet client specifications. The gap between these two groups is enormous. Congelarg defines itself in a way that is different from both groups by offering long-term service, transparent practices and a customized solution for each client. This unique approach has enabled Congelarg to grow in revenue and new accounts. The company also owns the best equipment such as trucks that can transport products of three different temperatures. Being currently engaged in acquiring more efficient means of transport opens Congelarg to significant market opportunities that allow it to further its strategic growth plan.

The CEO of Axis Logistica, the logistic company in charge of warehousing McDonald's products, is the first to confirm the value of Congelarg's strategy: "Francisco is offering a service of excellence, applying a language in common with his clients and developing strategic alliance relationships."

As companies outsource business processes in an effort to cut costs, the market for independent logistics firms is rapidly growing. Logistics – embracing such fields as inventory management and warehousing, distribution and transport, and customer service – is becoming critical to the success of more and more retailers, manufacturers and service providers. As a result, professionalized logistics companies are popping up to provide these companies with adequate distribution systems that give them a competitive edge and drive higher revenues and profits. In this context, Francisco Mackinlay and Congelarg have a great opportunity before them in Argentina and also in the South American region.

ENDEAVOR AND CONGELARG

In addition to local mentorship on negotiations, HR strategy, and administration issues, Francisco has benefited from an Entrepreneur Summit and local GEMA (Grupo Endeavor de Mejora y Apoya) program.

In 2007, CongelArg was selected by Endeavor and the Amex Foundation to participate in a year-long “Leaders in CSR” program.

Francisco often speaks on behalf of Endeavor about the role of entrepreneurs and corporate social responsibility.